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COLORADO CARES DAY PROVIDES VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE

Governor Owens, community leaders and volunteers will work together on service projects across Colorado to celebrate statehood

(DENVER) – Citizens, business leaders and elected officials are rolling up their sleeves to perform community service work as part of the 7th Annual Colorado Cares Day on Saturday, July 30.

This year's theme is *Communities Working Together*. Colorado Cares encourages volunteers to donate their time for projects such as painting, cleanup, and simple carpentry work serving families, seniors, children and other community members. There are 84 different service projects planned in twenty-six counties across the state. To locate and volunteer for projects in your area, visit the Colorado Cares website at www.colorado.gov/coloradocares.gov, or call 1-866-333-2202.

Colorado Cares Day was initiated by Governor Bill Owens to celebrate Colorado's statehood by encouraging individuals and organizations to go out into their communities to perform community service. By giving back to Colorado in a variety of ways, citizens are honoring Colorado and making the state an even better place to live. Each year the Colorado Cares Day activities are coordinated by the Governor's Commission on Community Service under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton.

On Saturday morning, Governor Owens will join volunteers in completing several projects at the Excelsior Youth Center in Aurora, 15001 East Oxford Avenue. Volunteers will be replacing sod with rock, cleaning and repairing patio furniture, and sorting donated library books.

"If you are not able to participate in one of the many organized Colorado Cares activities this Saturday, you still can help. Invite your children or a friend and pick up trash along a roadway or at a public park," said Gov. Owens. "August 1 is the date we celebrate Colorado's statehood – the state's birthday. The best present you can give is to help others through your community service. I hope you will join in this Saturday."

Colorado Cares Day projects connect volunteers with opportunities that match their schedules and interests. Volunteers can select from one-time, group-based volunteering, or longer-term opportunities.

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“This year we have seen a 56 percent increase in statewide service projects,” said Lieutenant Governor Norton. “Colorado Cares Day is making progress toward its goal of promoting community service and volunteerism among Coloradans. We are encouraged by the record number of citizens and organizations joining together to enrich the lives of others,” said Lieutenant Governor Norton. “Each of these service projects furthers our initiatives to strengthen Colorado families and promote volunteerism.”

Many communities and organizations have gotten involved – from the challenge issued by Pueblo city leaders to participate in projects in their community, to the efforts by the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs to encourage tribal members to join in the Mancos State Park Adopt-a-Lake project, Coloradans are exemplifying the idea of communities working together. In addition, numerous state agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Colorado Community College System, the Department of Public Health and Environment, the Department of Local Affairs, and the Department of Health Care Policy and Finance have developed service projects to benefit surrounding communities.

Among the other state officials lending a hand, Acting State Treasurer Mark Hillman will participate in a project coordinated by Brothers Redevelopment, Inc., and the LDS Church to paint and repair the homes of sixteen senior citizens.

Jane Norton was sworn in as Colorado’s 46th Lieutenant Governor on January 13, 2003. Her responsibilities include serving as the chair of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs; acting as point person for the Owens Administration on health insurance reform; strengthening families by promoting adoption, early childhood care and education efforts/initiatives, mentoring and volunteerism; and serving as Colorado’s delegate to the Aerospace States Association.

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